The Seed Sower.

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On Last Looking into Smiles' "Self-Help."

I.

Much musing have I read of strenuous men,—
Of soldier, painter, craftsman, those who wrought
And reaped success, and now in this world's ken
Loom largely; whom our younger ones are taught
To mould their lives on. Yet the more my thought
Turns towards the losing side, that unsung band
Of broken hearts who, ever failing, fought
The long, long battle, while the iron hand
Aye pressed them backward from their high emprise
Until they perished. And the rabble rout
Still rushes with stretched neck and staring eyes
To greet the coming man. So, let them shout,—
Faint grow the echoes of their rude applause;
Blot out that huckstering tale of gain and loss.
Behold the leader of a vanquished cause,
His arms extended on the bitter cross!

II.

What of the weak things of the earth? Of those
Who found no helper, or he came too late?
Of all that spectre multitude, who knows
Aught of their struggle with malignant fate?
Is there no Homer for the beaten side?
Are they beneath the wisdom of the wise?
The pity of the good? Let fools deride;
The tattered troops of Failure high I'll prize.
Such the brave sailor who with all his host
Slow, month by month, leashed in by fool's commands,
Rotted to death along the deadly coast,
And left the victory for another's hands.
And such was he who, born to guide a State,
Sunk in decay and gasping in death's throes,
Fell on the threshold of the captured gate,
Burst inward by the rush of Moslem foes.

HAROLD B. HARRISON.

Go Forward!

A SERMON

BY THE REV. L. P. JACKS, M.A.

"Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward."—EXODUS xiv. 15.

Next to believing in God, our greatest need is that we should believe in ourselves. To tell a man that he ought to believe in himself is to use words which are not unattended with danger, and I am well aware that certain sorts of religious teaching would look upon them with the strongest reprobation. We should be told that the attitude of mind which believes in oneself is contrary to all religion. Religion requires us to distrust ourselves, to make ourselves of no account, to be humble and to cast our weakness on the strength of God. And all that is perfectly right if you take a certain point of view. But there is another point of view from which, if we are bold enough to take it, we shall see that to believe in oneself is at least the second in order of the great needs of life.

The quality of believing in oneself, or what we mistake for that quality, often takes forms which are far from admirable. The believer in himself is apt to be vain, conceited, and domineering. Lacking all real dignity he yet puts on dignified airs and fondly expects that other men will take him at his own valuation. But in no true sense does such a man believe in himself. He worships the image of himself

which he sees in the magnifying glass of his own vanity. There is no resemblance, there is no affinity between him and the man who really believes in himself. For what is it that makes a self at all? I am made a self by the fact that I possess a will. Will is the true kernel of personality. Take Will out of our lives and you and I would become mere automata or, at best, thinking animals. Without Will we should not be persons. Round the fact of our possessing Will gathers all that makes us men. Will is the secret of character, whether it be good or bad. Character is formed not as some seem to think by influence which plays upon us from without, but by the way in which we respond to those influences when they come. And that is a matter of Will. We have a wonderful power of initiative, and it is the exercise of that power which gives form, individuality, and selfhood to a human life.

Believing in self then means no more, when properly understood, than belief in that power of the Will which is the kernel of self. Believe in the wonderful things the Will can accomplish. Take it as an axiom that there is nothing in life which the Will of man cannot bend and control towards a good result. Do not scruple to go as far as believing this—there is no possible situation in which your life may become involved which you cannot in some way force to yield you a blessing. It may be a hard thing to believe. But do not disbelieve it until you have tried.

The difference between a base and a noble life is strictly under our control. Many there are indeed who have never tried to control it, but even they, aye the most hopeless of them to all seeming, have some remnants of moral power left which they only refrain from exerting because they don't know they have it. But once let them be convinced of that and amazing results will follow. Are not those results written down in the reports of our missionaries year by year? Were there only one such case on record to set against the thousands of moral failures in the world, that one case would establish the all-conquering power of the human Will. The difference between a base and a noble life is under our hand. Other differences there are which we equally control, but enough if we centre our belief in ourselves in the one I have just named.

A preacher is often prevented from speaking about the Will by a peculiar difficulty. Connected with the subject there is, as you know, a very perplexing question. Is the Will of man really free? Have we a genuine power of choosing our way in life, or is it all set and determined for us by forces which rule us but which we cannot rule? Am I always *bound* to do what I do, and when I have done it may I say I might have done otherwise if I had chosen? Unless the Will is free it would seem there is no will at all, and the bare notion that we control anything is a delusion. This question confronts everyone who speaks of the will, and it is not easy to go on speaking without entering in those metaphysical discussions which often provoke doubts rather than solve them.

I have known men whose moral power has been seriously damaged by their perplexity about that question. The mischief has come not because they hold the one view or the other, but because they have become so absorbed in studying the question of the will that they have forgotten to use the will itself. In their perplexity about a mere theoretical question they forget to act. They lose the power of initiative, they cannot decide. The courage to face the occasion oozes out of them, and when they have thus lost their will-power they naturally come to the conclusion that the Will is not free, and allege that as the excuse for their inactivity and failure.

Hold then what view you like about the question of free-will, for I shall not embark upon it to-day. But one thing you must admit. You must admit that *effort exists*. There is such a thing as effort in the world. Let there be more of it! Effort has existed in your lives and in mine during the year that has gone. Let it exist to a greater degree in the year that has begun! Every man knows what trying means. He has *tried* in the past. Let him try new things, greater things, higher things in the future! We have already seen something of what trying will do. We have tried and we have succeeded. The result may not be great, but it is great enough to be the earnest of something greater, great enough to encourage us in the belief that if we try we can make a better record in 1903 than we did in 1902. Let me say that I am myself a believer in the free-will

of man. I believe that God gave us all a genuine freedom in choosing between the evil and the good. But I am not eager to insist upon it now. I will not argue with the man who disagrees with me about that. Only let me appeal to that man to believe in the *existence of effort*, and to see to it that the spirit of effort, the spirit of trying, shall not diminish but grow. Explain effort as you will—the *fact is there, the thing exists*—and am I not right in saying that the supreme interests of life are attached to it. What hope is there, for instance, of any permanent amelioration of the miseries of the poor unless by some means or other, let the means be what they will, you can succeed in strengthening the will-power in these unhappy multitudes. And in our personal and individual lives how vain the hope that we shall go on to better things in the new year unless we are really determined to get them and to have them. Betterment does not come of itself either to communities or to individuals. Men must rouse themselves, they must reach out their hands, they must put forth their energies, they must shake off their fetters —in a word they must try. Vain indeed is the work of the social reformer unless the spirit of effort is in the people to make the best of his reforms. And vain is the preaching of all gospels, and the holding up of all ideals, unless those who listen to these things remember that the attainment of them depends in the last resort on their own power of exertion, which power they feel themselves to possess. Effort exists, I repeat. Let us have more of it. And let us believe that there is no limit to the good things we can win for the world and for ourselves—by trying.

Again, I think all men will admit there is a difference between a base and a noble life. There is a difference between right and wrong, between high and low. These differences may be hard to explain, but the point of supreme importance to you and me is that they exist. When we have the high and the low before us we are seldom in doubt as to which is which. But some persons when they see this difference immediately want to start a discussion. "Let us have a theory of the situation," they cry. "*Why* is this right and why is that wrong. Let us have the reasons, and when we are satisfied we will begin to think about acting?"

Now, all that is well enough in its place, but its place is not large in your life and mine. Our chief wisdom lies in a far simpler matter. When you see the right, go for it and leave the explanation till later! Get it done, get it acted, and then begin to discuss! And let me remind you that the mere intellectual understanding of right is dependent upon somewhat peculiar conditions. You may discuss the right for ever and get no nearer to understanding it than you were at first. But do it, and at once you begin to understand what it means. Religion, someone has said, is life looked at from the point of view of a man who is trying to do his best. I do not think that a truer description of religion has ever been given. If all the men in the world who are trying to do their best were able to say what is really in their hearts—and that is what so few can do—if they could all declare their deepest feeling about life you would hear the words of a universal religion, you would then get to the kernel of what is meant, though often so badly said, by all the creeds and doctrines of all sects and all churches. Yes, you cannot understand the right until you do it, and, conversely, you cannot do the right without, in some dim way at least, understanding it. For all practical purposes, and for all highest purposes, therefore, we need not go beyond what we all admit—the difference between the high and the low. That difference exists, and side by side with it exists our power to take what is high and refuse what is low.

With that faith in our hearts let us go forward into the new year. As to the past, no doubt many things are there which, if we dwelt on them, would incline us to disbelieve in ourselves. But believe in yourself to this extent at least—you have the power to turn your back upon all that, and the sooner you do it the better! Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou forward into the vineyards of God! Fix we our minds on the great things we can yet do—if we try.

Something ere the end,
Some deed of noble note may yet be done,
Nor unbecoming men who strove with gods.
Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world,
Push off and setting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.

There is much to be done, and doubt not that you and I are here to do it. Everywhere, as you know, misery clogs and burdens human life, and very sure I am that some portion of that misery grows like a weed in the garden which you and I have to cultivate and keep clean. Let our least excuse for having lived be this—that some portion of misery which was here when we began shall not be here when we finish. Greater things no doubt await us, but if we begin on that the rest will become plain. Let no obscurity hanging over the ultimate issues of things prevent us from the daily duty of pegging away at what seems to us right. Let us be *afraid* of nothing—for we are more than equal to any demands that shall be made upon us. Infinite strength is always at the back of an honest man, that he may meet whatever has to be met. Let us go forward with stout hearts upon the untrodden ways of the New Year, breathing the spirit of Browning's splendid death-song—

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward;
Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better, sleep to wake.

A Coronation.

The old Wanderer sank down in the valley to die. The mountains towered above him; he could not cross them, and his childhood's home was on the further side. In this, as in all else, he had failed. He had failed in his Epic and his Symphony; he had failed in the quest for Daily Bread; he had failed in his marriage.

And the iron had entered into his soul, for it had once been warm and eager, and had longed to show forth the Beauty of the Sanctuary; longed to prove how fair between the outgoings of the morning and the evening may be the quiet course of man's labour; longed that all should hear how exceeding lovely is the song of the morning stars when the sons of God mate with the daughters of God.

But though the iron had pierced his soul, he had wrought it into a glowing mass at the furnace of Love, and now, as he lay on the hard rock and the shadows fell, it still gave out a smouldering light and warmth.

A barefooted child silently held out her hand; her eyes were pools of bitter water. The Wanderer stroked her face and gave her his last coin and his last piece of bread. She stole noiselessly away, and he was again alone. Darker grew the valley, and dimmer and chiller the light and warmth within him. He raised himself on his elbow, and his eyes sought to pierce the pitiless rampart in front of him.

"Ah!" he cried, "might I but have seen once more the green hill-top where at sunset God bade me be His poet; the river-side, where Harmony first rushed through me like a flood; the little room where ordered life was linked with a greater whole; the beech-wood where, our feet amid a sheet of bluebells, she and I heard the music of the spheres, transcending poet's speech or musician's song. Then might I have known, in spite of this mortal sinking, here at the very centre and stronghold of my being, that those things were the reality, this the illusion. Ah, God! if this *be* the reality!"

"Look!" said a voice beside him.

A Stranger stood there, clad in a grey robe whose border seemed to the Wanderer's dying eyes to be edged with rose-hued sea-shells, that gave out a far-away exquisite music. The Stranger's feet were shod in sandals, and beneath the grey hood his brow was wreathed with blossoming thorns; his eyes were young, but older than the world, and were filled with a light which was neither that of the sun nor of the stars, but which seemed to spring from the source of both.

One arm he passed round the Wanderer; with the other he pointed towards the mountains.

They were transfigured—glowing with unearthly fires.

"You thought them foes?" said the Stranger (and his voice, wherein the song of the sea-shells mingled with the harmony of the spheres, made the Wanderer for ever sure of the one Reality). "Behold, they hail you as brother! All day long have they waited, their faces scarred by many sorrows, their chasms swept by storms and water courses, their barren grinding ice-fields aching with longing for the fresh green and myriad blossoms of the valleys; the

kindly human voices and happy homesteads which can never be theirs. All day long have they waited, like mighty breasts swelling with sympathy for the life of Earth; waited, but not in idleness, for the morning kiss of God has consecrated them to titanic labours, and the valleys are the greener, the flowers the fairer, and the homesteads the happier for their scars, their ice-fields, and their water-courses. All day long have they waited in silent patience for God's evening kiss, kindling those fires which are an unalterable pledge of Dawn. You thought them barriers, just as your own towering ideals have been barriers, shutting you out from happiness? See! their aërial gates are flung wide, and through these alone may you pass home."

As the Wanderer looked, the mountains seemed to melt; he saw only a glory of light, and aërial flame-hued gates through which poured a flood of music. It swelled until it reached a point of ecstacy where the multitudinous voices and instruments fainted and failed, and it was merged in one voice alone—the voice of the Stranger. In one ineffable melody wherein Song was fused with Speech, the Wanderer seemed to hear:—

"Behold! It is their coronation—and yours."

And as he sank back in the arms of the Stranger, the mountains flung him their crown of fire and of peace.

DOROTHEA HOLLINS.

A Graduated Syllabus of Moral Instruction for Elementary Schools.*

This syllabus is the result of the prolonged deliberations of a special committee of the Moral Instruction League, assisted by expert advice from many directions There is no single moral instruction method. According to the individual genius of the teacher, the vehicle may be biography, natural history, or a number of varied illustrations. There are those who favour giving a series of connected lessons on one subject, such as Temperance or Truthfulness, and others who prefer to deal with a subject less exhaustively. A strong feeling, not unanimous however, exists that illustrations should be generally chosen from nature and history rather than from fiction, though it depends on the teacher and the age of the child whether the life immediately around or the larger storehouse of present-day and past history should be drawn upon. So, too, there is a decided preponderance of opinion in favour of extolling the good and showing its reasonableness and its beauty rather than warning against evil and insisting on its hatefulness. In no case, however, should the teaching be abstract, while short poems, quotations, and proverbs might with advantage be committed to memory. We would also state that the figures in the syllabus below do not necessarily imply that the lessons are to be given in the order which appears. Suggestions for amending the syllabus will be welcome, and should be sent to the hon. secretary of the Moral Instruction League. The special committee are at present issuing printed forms for teachers' notes, on the basis of which they intend to draw up further literature relating to this syllabus. The League has also in view the publication of Notes on Moral Lessons, Specimen Lessons, Illustrative Matter, a book on Moral Instruction Methods, a Secondary Syllabus, and like literature.

INFANTS.

1. CLEANLINESS.
   (*a*) Clean hands, faces, and clothes.
   (*b*) Clean habits—*e.g.*, the proper use of the lavatory.
2. TIDINESS.
   (*a*) In the home, school, and street.
   (*b*) Personal tidiness.
3. MANNERS.
   (*a*) Greetings at home and at school.
   (*b*) Behaviour at meals.
   (*c*) Care of furniture, books, toys, and other property.
   (*d*) Punctuality and promptness.
4. KINDNESS.
   (*a*) To parents, elders, and teachers.
   (*b*) To each other in the home, school, and street.
   (*c*) To domesticated animals—*e.g.*, dogs and cats.
5. FAIRNESS.
   (*a*) Mine and thine.
   (*b*) Fairness towards others.
6. TRUTHFULNESS.
   (*a*) Confidence in parents and teachers to be encouraged.
   (*b*) "Dramatic" lies to be discouraged.
7. COURAGE.
   (*a*) When alone.
   (*b*) Darkness, shadows, and strange noises.

STANDARD I.

1. CLEANLINESS.
   Use and care of parts of the body—*e.g.*, hair, eyes, ears, nose, lips, teeth, hands, and feet.
2. MANNERS.
   (*a*) In eating and drinking: moderation.
   (*b*) In question and answer: politeness.
   (*c*) In bearing: quietness, unobtrusiveness, patience in waiting.
   (*d*) Punctuality in the home and the school.
3. KINDNESS.
   (*a*) To companions at play.
   (*b*) To flies, worms, and other harmless creatures.
   (*c*) To pet animals—*e.g.*, rabbits.
4. GRATITUDE.
   To parents and teachers.

* We have inserted this well-thought-out syllabus as a matter of interest to our Sunday School teachers. It would be easy to find Bible stories with Bible passages to be taken with each lesson.—ED.

5. FAIRNESS.
   Ungrudging disposition, especially when favours are distributed.
6. TRUTHFULNESS.
   (*a*) In speech: the importance of exactness; the avoidance of exaggeration.
   (*b*) In manner: the importance of simplicity; the avoidance of affectation.
7. COURAGE.
   (*a*) Cheerful endurance of little pains and discomforts; manliness.
   (*b*) Tale-bearing: when justifiable.
   (*c*) In relation to creatures inspiring instinctive fear in children—*e.g.*, mice, frogs, spiders, and beetles.

STANDARD II.

1. CLEANLINESS.
   (*a*) In the home.
   (*b*) In the school and street—*e.g.*, to desist from scattering paper and orange peel.
   (*c*) Neatness.
2. MANNERS.
   (*a*) In speech: courtesy and clearness.
   (*b*) In bearing: behaviour in the streets.
   (*c*) How to perform a simple service—*e.g.*, how to carry a message.
3. HONESTY.
   (*a*) In work.
   (*b*) Restoration of lost property.
   (*c*) Preserving and protecting property at home, at school, or in public places.
4. JUSTICE.
   (*a*) To companions.
   (*b*) To the aged.
   (*c*) To the less fortunate—*e.g.*, the weak, imbeciles, stammerers, dwarfs.
5. TRUTHFULNESS.
   Promises and confidences.
6. COURAGE.
   (*a*) To follow good example and to resist bad example.
   (*b*) To confess faults.
   (*c*) Under difficulties: self-reliance.
   (*d*) In bad weather—*e.g.*, not to fear thunder and lightning.
7. SELF-CONTROL.
   (*a*) In food: preference for plain and wholesome fare.
   (*b*) In bearing: the avoidance of wilfulness, peevishness, obstinacy, sulkiness, violent temper, and quarrelling.
   (*c*) In speech: the avoidance of rudeness and hastiness.
   (*d*) In thought: checking of evil thoughts.
8. INDUSTRY.
   (*a*) Helping in the home.
   (*b*) The value of industry in the school.

STANDARD III.

1. MANNERS.
   (*a*) Refinement of language.
   (*b*) Behaviour in public places.
   (*c*) Unselfishness.
2. HUMANITY.
   (*a*) Personal help to those in need.
   (*b*) Making other people happy.
3. OBEDIENCE.
   (*a*) Immediate and hearty obedience to parents and teachers.
   (*b*) Respect for rules and regulations.
4. PATIENCE.
   (*a*) Forbearance.
   (*b*) Contentedness.
   (*c*) Forgiveness.
5. PERSEVERANCE.
   (*a*) In work: hard or distasteful tasks.
   (*b*) In play.
   (*c*) In self-improvement.
6. JUSTICE.
   In thought, speech, and action.
7. TRUTHFULNESS.
   (*a*) All the truth and nothing but the truth.
   (*b*) Avoidance of prevarication and withholding part of the truth.
   (*c*) Avoidance of deception through manner or gesture.
   (*d*) The importance of frankness.
8. ORDER.
   (*a*) The value of system.
   (*b*) The value of punctuality.
   (*c*) The value of promptness.

(To be continued).

Notes and Jottings.

The death of the Archbishop of Canterbury removes a strong and interesting figure from English public life. He was a man of solid intellectual attainments rather than of brilliance and originality. Early in life he had some reputation as a broad Churchman, and he never quite outlived it. From the time he was made a Bishop, more than thirty years ago, he gradually hardened into ecclesiastical moulds, and Liberals came to look upon him as a lost leader. As his influence grew with his transference to London and Canterbury, he showed real gifts of statesmanship in a difficult crisis, and became a master of judicious compromise; but he was never a religious force of the first magnitude. Intensely loyal to the Establishment, his chief aim was probably to ward off the danger of disruption threatened by extreme opinions.

On the whole, Dr. Temple's career, able, judicious, and in many ways brilliant as it has been, leaves an impression of inadequacy in

view of his exceptional gifts and strong force of character. It is another instance of the besetting difficulty of the Church of England. It discourages originality. It loves average opinions. It favours scholarship of a technical kind within a prescribed dogmatic area. But it has no welcome for advancing spiritual thought. With a skill, which we can admire even while we deplore it, it turns the gifts of its strongest sons from living problems of religion into the safe channels of ecclesiastical statesmanship.

In view of Dr. Temple's last appearance in the House of Lords, in order to support the Education Bill and the claims of denominational schools, an earlier opinion of his, quoted in a recent number of the *Athenæum*, is of special interest. It occurs in the report of his evidence before the Duke of Newcastle's Commission in 1857. "I do not think," he said at that time, "the diminution of religious zeal [in education] an evil; I think much of it very unhealthy. . . What I want is a quiet sense of duty; at present we have a desire to extend the influence of a particular denomination."

In a recent speech the Bishop of Manchester put his hand into a Nonconformist hornet's nest. He roundly accused the Nonconformist Churches of neglecting the pastoral care of the poor; and he pointed to a district of Manchester with a population of 100,000 souls to support his remarks. The consequence has been a somewhat lively controversy in the columns of the *Manchester Guardian*. This "I am as good as you" style of religious argument is far from edifying on either side, and the Bishop would probably have been better advised if he had confined himself to urging his own clergy to greater zeal. The special point at issue seems to be the non-residence of Nonconformist ministers in the poor quarters of our great cities; but it is not fair to assume that it is only under a rigid parochial system that effective pastoral work can be done. For the Anglican clergymen his church is the base of operations, and there is strong reason why he should live next door to it; but the same argument does not apply to the Nonconformist who has no parish boundaries. Both systems have their place, and it is rather foolish to pit one against the other.

We believe, however, that many Nonconformist Churches would be wise if they paid more heed to pastoral work and the duties of neighbourhood. Mechanical visiting among the poor, done rapidly and under an unbending system, is of little use. The man who rushes through a long round of visits in an afternoon may look with satisfaction on the number of houses to be marked off his list, but he has probably been wasting his time. It is friendship which is needed, and friendship is not cemented in five minutes' formal talk with the minister. The mere fact of being at the beck and call of everybody does not necessarily involve larger capacity for Christian influence. It is fatal to think more of the crowd than of the individual in pastoral work. At the same time, no earnest Christian minister ought to consider that his duties of helpfulness, as a steward of the living grace of God, are confined to the members of his congregation. All need that appeals to him for sympathy, all sorrow that he can comfort, has its claim.

Mr. Joseph Clayton has recently issued a short biography of Father Dolling. It costs the modest sum of one shilling, and we can cordially recommend it as giving a vivid picture of one of the truest friends of the poor. Dolling was an Irishman with an overflowing fund of humour and a magnetic sympathy with every aspect of human life. His open house was among the noblest experiments in Christian socialism which our time has known. Thither the lame dogs of society resorted to be healed, the jail-bird, the spendthrift, the clergyman drifting to ruin through drink, all the sad wreckage of humanity from which most of us turn away. When he died in May of last year, at the age of 51, he was as poor as St. Francis, but rich in the affection of men and women in all parts of the world, soldiers and sailors, crazy people in workhouses and hospitals, thieves and prostitutes, the "publicans and sinners," whom he had made his friends, and saved by his influence for the better life. It is personal force and the divine passion of love which tell most in religious work.

God for His own sake—Goodness because it is good—Truth because it is lovely—this is the Christian's aim.

Richard Baxter.*

STATUE AT KIDDERMINSTER.

[Born, Rowton, Shropshire, November 12th, 1615. At Free School, Worcester, 1630-33. With tutor (Richard Wickstead) at Ludlow Castle: thence to Whitehall, 1633. Death of mother, 1634. Head Master at Dudley, 1638. Ordained at Worcester same year. Assistant Minister at Bridgnorth, 1639-41. Refused to subscribe to "*Et Cetera*" Oath, 1640. Lecturer at Kidderminster, 1641-43. Chaplain to Garrison at Coventry, 1644. Chaplain to Parliamentary Forces, 1645.. In retirement, 1647. Returned to Kidderminster, 1648. Wrote "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," 1650. Framed the Worcestershire Agreement, 1652. Opposed the Solemn League and Covenant. Removed to London, 1660. Preached before the Commons. Appointed Chaplain to Charles II. Refused Bishopric of Hereford. Ejected from Episcopacy, 1662. Retired to Acton, and married Margaret Charlton, who died 1681. Arrested on charge of libelling the Church, tried before Judge Jeffreys, sentenced to pay 500 marks, and imprisoned until payment, 1685. Released from prison, 1686. Qualified as a Dissenter, 1689. Died, December 8th, 1691. Buried, Christ Church, London.]

Of all the Ejected Clergy whom the Act of Uniformity forced into unwilling Nonconformity, none has left a deeper impress upon the religious life of England than Richard Baxter. His piety, his catholicity, his whole personality were, indeed, potent for good in his own day: they are still precious in ours. He has won such tributes of esteem as have rarely, if ever, fallen to the memory of any divine. Bishop Wilkins declared that, "if he had lived in the primitive time, he would have been one of the fathers of the Church." Dean Stanley took a no less exalted view at the unveiling of his statue, which is here reproduced. Dr. Jowett pronounced him "one of the greatest of Englishmen, not only of his own, but of any time," and preached a sermon to his memory within the walls of Westminster Abbey. Dr. Martineau commended frequently the "Baxterian Catholicity," which, in spirit, and partly in polity, he desired for our own day. One of the small treasures in my library is Dr. Martineau's own copy of Baxter's "Life and Times," abridged by Calamy.

And Baxter's writings, so numerous as to necessitate no less than 168 entries, bear witness not only to his amazing literary fertility, but also to his abounding spiritual vitality. When Boswell asked Dr. Johnson what works of Baxter he should read, the answer came, "Read any of them, for they are all good." Barrow considered that "his practical writings were never mended, and his controversial ones seldom confuted." But even if we do not take Dr. Johnson's advice, there are at least three of Baxter's works which stand out from the rest, and deserve perennial readers, viz.; "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," which ranks next to the *Pilgrim's Progress* in its range of devotional influence; the "Breviate of the Life of Mrs. Margaret Baxter," a truly sweet and tender Puritan

* Vide *Seed Sower*, August and September, 1899.

figure; and the "Reliquiæ Baxterianæ," edited by his friend, Matthew Sylvester.

The promoters of the Prize Essay Scheme, in connection with The Guilds Union, could not possibly have done better than set as one subject Richard Baxter. In addition to the recommended references, intending candidates may find of use the above summary of events and dates, together with Dr. Sadler's "Biographical Sketch;" they may also be glad to look into his face.—F. K. Freeston.

Sport and Sportsmen.

Apart from hunting, which was a serious occupation, and apart from mere amusement, requiring little or no exertion, sport in the ancient world was athletic sport, and athletic sport, I imagine, had its origin, partly in love of superiority, and partly in love of distinction. The wish to excel comes first, and then the wish to be praised for excelling, and, within due bounds, both are quite natural and wholesome desires.

So pure were these two elements in sport that the writers of the New Testament did not hesitate to draw some of their illustrations of the Christian life from the arena and the ring. One apostle, writing to men of Corinth who gloried in their own Isthmian games, compares spiritual effort with such contests as the foot-race and the boxing-match. Another writer appeals to his fellow-Christians as fellow-athletes; bids them look up to the rows of "witnesses" rising like a "cloud" above their heads; urges them to lay aside every "weight" that would hold them down, or cling about them; if they shrink from spiritual discipline, let them remember that the spirit also, like the body, has its "gymnasium," in which it must be "exercised." "I have fought a good fight;" "I have finished my course," are phrases which perfectly describe the close of a saintly life, but the word "fight" was then the word for a wrestling-bout, and the word "course" belonged to the two-hundred yards flat-race.

If such borrowing of sporting phrase is now impossible, it must be because sport has been degraded.

The degradation of modern sport may be traced to two sources. The first is the connection of sport with betting and gambling. I say nothing here of the wrongness of betting and gambling in themselves, but I am quite sure that those sports which are most in repute are those which are least associated with them. The love of spectacle is not in itself discreditable, and to those who know the game, and all its possibilities, the pleasure of looking on at a football match is not much less intellectual than that of watching a chess tournament; and the pleasure is not lowered because it is felt by thousands at a time; but it is lowered when the mind is taken off the game as a trial of skill and judgment and endurance, and finds its chief interest, not in the triumph of merit, and in the honour due to merit, but in self-interest and the chance of personal gain.

The second source is the connection of sport with cruelty, taking cruelty as the infliction of unnecessary pain. Wild-beast shows and gladiatorial contests were hateful to Jew and Christian alike, and there are passages in the New Testament which point to the detestation in which they were held. We, too, speak with horror of the cruel sports of our forefathers, though there are forms of baiting amongst us which are not yet extinct. Of the wrongness of open field sports it is more difficult to speak, chiefly because it is not easy to say when and where the pain inflicted begins to be unnecessary. There are things connected with country-life which I do not altogether defend, but I often wish that those dwellers in towns who declaim against hunting and shooting would open their eyes a little more to the far greater barbarities that are practised in their midst under the names of trade and traffic. I wish they could realise, for instance, the vast difference between the fate of a pheasant reared by a keeper, and shot by a squire, and the fate of a chicken starved down to starvation price on an Irish holding, and consigned by rail and steamer to an English salesman. The cramming of imprisoned fowls on a Surrey farm is a form of cruelty which differs certainly in kind, but not much in degree.

The credit of the term "sportsman" has gone down with the credit of the term "sport." The derived term "sportsmanlike" has still a sound of the old meaning that a sportsman must be, before all things, a lover of fair play, even if, for the sake of fairness, he must accept risk, inconvenience, and perhaps loss. A little time ago

a man was prosecuted for cruelty in his own home. Witnesses were called in defence of character, and one of these said that he had always known the prisoner as a good sportsman. His notions of fair play, evidently, did not cover the case of defenceless wife or child. Another man was lately prosecuted in vain for dangling a squealing hare in front of a dog in a so-called coursing match. In this case the offender escaped, not only legal penalty, but also in all probability that which would have had more wholesome effect upon him—the censure of his companions. If popular ideas of fair play, and of what it is to be a sportsman, have sunk to this level, I do not see why a card-sharper should not enjoy the title.

Enough has been said, I hope, to show that where manliness and generous disinterestedness are not found, there true sport cannot be, and the name sportsman is misapplied.

E. P. Barrow.

"Everyman!"

A MORALITY PLAY AND ITS MORAL.

The revival and singularly striking representation by Mr. Ben Greet's Company of the ancient morality play, "Everyman," gives occasion for a good deal of thought. The very title, "Everyman," affords a clue to the idea which the priestly author sought to express, viz., that "every man walketh in a vain show," and "surely, every man at his best estate is altogether vanity." In a very real sense it appeared to me that this dramatic allegory, which takes us back to a time a century earlier than Shakespeare, was nevertheless a play for our own time, with a distinctly needed message for the age in which we live; and I could not help feeling that the mediæval clerics were wisely inspired, who composed this and similar moral plays, and conducted their performance as religious functions, for purposes of instruction in virtuous and godly living, utilising even their own sacred buildings for the rendering. Certainly, this was a way of bringing home to people the sinfulness of sin, the jeopardy of a heedless life spent on the pursuit of vain and unprofitable gratifications; and while every age requires its own methods, and without suggesting that those of the 15th century are adapted to the needs of the 20th, one could wish at least to see the Church of to-day devise a means as graphic and forcible of stemming the tide of irreligious worldliness, and drawing the general mind to the contemplation of more serious topics.

Before sketching in briefest outline the action of "Everyman," I may perhaps be permitted to pay my tribute to the dignity, the high seriousness with which those responsible for its production performed their share in it, the absence of any jarring note, of all tawdriness, of all theatricality, in the baser sense of the term. Only a fine sense of the fitness of things could have ensured so large a measure of success, where it was so easy to offend against unwritten and almost impalpable canons of taste and feeling. The right note was struck from the very first, from the opening prologue of the grave messenger, praying the hearers to

> "Give their audience,
> And hear this matter with reverence,
> By figure a moral play;
> The summoning of Everyman called it is,
> That of our lives and ending shows
> How transitory we be all day."

This introduction over, the action, following the Biblical precedent of the Book of Job, opens in the spiritual realm, the Almighty complaining of His wayward creatures:

> "Of ghostly sight the people be so blind,
> Drowned in sin, they know not Me, their God;
> In worldly riches held is all their mind,
> They fear not my right wiseness, that sharp rod."

All humanity is typified under the figure of one individual, called "Everyman," who "liveth without fear" of God; and he is now, at the command of the Eternal, summoned by Death, that "mighty messenger," to meet his Creator and render an account of his deeds. No one who has seen it will soon forget the striking meeting between "Everyman," gaily attired, on pleasure bent, and the grim Emissary, who bids him prepare for that pilgrimage from which there is no returning, and to give that reckoning for which he is all unready. "Everyman" is not represented as a particularly heinous criminal—I do not think he is even a notorious evil-liver: he is merely a youth of the pleasure-loving type, no doubt quite respectable as judged by worldly standards, a gentlemanly sort of sinner, who has

lived as he listed, not so much deliberately setting himself against God's ordinance as simply careless of it. Wealth has attracted him, and the indulgence for which wealth gives the opportunity—and he has followed both, a pagan soul; religious observances and practice, with their austerity of principle, have not had an equal charm for him, and he has duly banished all thought of such things from his heart, not knowing that the Epicurean's exultant "Let us eat and drink and be merry" always dies away in the despairing moan "For to-morrow we die." And now when "to-morrow" has suddenly become "to-day," his anguish, his mental and moral disarray are pitiable to behold. Which of his pursuits, which of his companions will be serviceable to him now? Which of them will help him, cheer him on that dark and lonely road? In the stupid way of easy-going, tavern-hunting, boon companionship, "Everyman" has been a very "sociable" young fellow, such "good company" as it is called; but the symbolical figure of "Fellowship," a merry roysterer, full of big promises at first, is still fuller of excuses when it comes to putting his views of assistance to the test, and bids "Everyman" go alone. The bonds of kinship similarly snap, self-interest proving stronger than affection. In utter dread, "Everyman" turns to riches, wondering whether wealth will go with him and help him to make good his reckoning before God; but wealth can help him in this world only: locked fast in chests, stacked in bags, it cannot stir.

> "I follow no man in such voyages. . . .
> I am too little, I may not endure;
> I follow no man one foot, be thou sure."

Moreover, "Everyman" has to learn that love of wealth is contrary to the Love Everlasting: its effect is, and in his case has proved, soul-killing; its very purpose to deceive man and ensnare him to ruin.

"Of whom shall I now counsel take?" exclaims "Everyman," feeling utterly forsaken when "Wealth," with fiendish mockery of his distress, has bidden him adieu: and only then he remembers that perhaps his Good-Deeds may be of use to him in his present condition. Small wonder he has not remembered before; for, truth to tell, his Good-Deeds seem to have been few, casual acts of disinterested righteousness and pity performed at long intervals, and only when their performance involved no particular inconvenience. Yet, such as they are, he now invokes them; but "Good-Deeds," in the guise of a sister of charity, tells him that she is too weak to accompany him before God, too weak even to stand, bound and rendered powerless by the sins "Everyman" has committed. Good-Deeds' sister, "Knowledge or Wisdom," must first step in to enable "Everyman" to make his reckoning; to the guidance of that majestic figure he is induced to commit himself, and "Knowledge" prevails on him to seek confession and do penance for his sins. However little we may be attracted either by the Catholic practice of seeking absolution at the hands of the priest or of performing penance by acts of self-torture, we shall be wise in discerning what is the truth underlying these acts: the truth, namely, that avowal of guilt before God and man, and the practical manifestation of a wish to make amends, must precede the obtaining of forgiveness. "Everyman's" Good-Deeds" become effective only when he has purged himself from his wickedness; formerly unable to stand, "Good-Deeds" now hastens to his side, greeting him with affection and promising to be by him both on his journey and before the throne of the Supreme Judge, where she will make clear his title to salvation.

And there, with "Everyman" exchanging his gay worldly apparel for the penitent's garb, and receiving the Blessed Sacrament, the action might approach its close, were there not one lesson still to be learnt. "Everyman" has already discovered that no external possessions can help a man in the hour of his extremity: he has yet to find out that in that hour not even the possessions a man deems peculiarly his own, yea, part of his very self, will avail or remain with him—neither beauty, nor strength, nor discretion, nor faculties of sense. To the grave's brink these symbolical figures follow—but there shudderingly forsake him: naked, unaccompanied by aught save such goodness as he may call his, the soul quits this known for yonder unknown sphere. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither man goeth; and to what lies beyond the grave, he takes nothing that was his own, except his character.

Music of the celestial choir tells us—"Everyman" having descended into the tomb—that his soul is received in the highest; and an angel, in words that certainly savour more of the *kindliness* which the Church of Rome extends towards her faithful children, than of strict justice, confirms the compassionate verdict thus:

"Come, excellent elect spouse to Jesu;
Hereabove thou shalt go;
Because of thy singular virtue,
Now thy soul is taken thy body fro.
Thy reckoning is crystal-clear:
Now shalt thou into the heavenly sphere,
Unto the which all ye shall come
That liveth well before the day of doom."

And the moral of this play? One might sum it up in the words of the Epilogue, spoken by the same grave messenger who introduced the action:

"Remember Beauty, Sense, Discretion, Strength,
They all at last do Everyman forsake
Save his Good Deeds, these doth he take:
But yet beware, for an they be small,
Before the Lord, he hath no help at all.
But he that hath his reckoning whole and sound
High in the heavens shall he be crowned;
Unto the which place God bring us all thither,
That we may live body and soul together."

But that, if you will bear with me a moment longer, is not quite all I wish to say on this remarkable production of the mediæval spirit.

I observed in my opening words that "Everyman," in a peculiar sense, was a play for our day; I may supplement this by saying that perhaps at no time save ours since its first appearance, could this play have been reproduced before an English audience. It is one of the peculiar features of the last couple of generations that we have re-discovered the Middle Ages—re-discovered that the period indicated by that term was not merely a stretch of gross darkness miraculously dispersed at the time of the Reformation, but an epoch with poetical, artistic, imaginative treasures which we are slowly beginning to appreciate again. Protestantism, being an unimaginative form of religion, placed a ban upon the imagination, and succeeded in suppressing that faculty for nearly three centuries; an exception, such as Bunyan, merely proving the rule. That faculty is only now coming back to us. While rigid Protestant views were dominant, a representation like that of "Everyman" would have been impossible. I certainly think there is a balance of gain in that change of the public mind which enables us to appreciate such a performance without dreams of the Inquisition and cries of "No Popery." But let us beware of another extreme. Protestantism, with its narrowness and rigour, has a moral quality of firmness and straightness which we cannot afford to lose, and which Catholicism notoriously lacks; and imagination, while a precious gift, needs to be guided and held in check by sanity of judgment and strength of moral conviction. I can imagine that some people would be, not benefited, but likely to be harmed by a stage spectacle whose every element seemed to glorify the ecclesiastical doctrines and practices of Rome; it is not everyone who might be safely recommended to witness such a performance. Do I therefore condemn it? By no means. The individual must use his discretion and faculty of choice, to his own master he standeth or falleth.

The generality of us would be better, I believe, for the infusion of more rather than less of the imaginative, the pictorial, the symbolic in our religion and the acts in which it finds expression. Assuredly there is a certain gain in a conception which makes the soul the hero of a tremendous spiritual drama, tremendous issues depending upon the triumph of the powers of light with those of darkness. And even where that struggle is crudely represented, there is more truth in such a conception—which at least affirms the soul's infinite worth—than in that shallow modern view which holds that man's conduct is but the irresponsible outcome of irresponsible forces—heredity and environment—and that man's destiny is bounded by the grave. Truer than that by far in essence—whatever exception we may take to details—is the belief which is given expression to in the play of "Everyman."

I conclude by wishing that the Church of to-day could devise a means—adapted to modern conditions—as effective in preaching to men the solemnity of life, the necessity of filling our days with what will last, of striving to possess the only goods that will not forsake us in death, as did the Church of the Middle Ages in its mystery and morality plays. We, like the men of old, need to pray: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; let me know how frail I am." "So teach us to number our days, that we may get us an heart of wisdom."

J. Warschauer.

Four Hymns.

Often in lowly hearts on earth
There burns a quiet light,
And many a grace of highest worth
Shines clear in God's pure sight.

Often in lowly tasks of earth
A lofty power abides,
And duty comes to glorious birth
Where humbleness resides.

And to the men of lowly place,
The gentle and the meek,
God's truth unveils a radiant face,—
They find who humbly seek.

Lord of the lowly place and task,
Lord of the lowly heart,
For light, and truth and power we ask,
These lofty gifts impart.

We send our hearts before us
To that dear heavenly home,
Despite the veil between us
And those who bid us come:
We cease to mourn our treasures,
Not lost but hid from sight,
Who make more homelike for us
That world of glorious light.

We send our hearts before us
Out of the wind and rain,
To where they dwell in sunshine
Who here knew toil and pain;
We would not for our solace
Call any back again,
To bleed with us and suffer
Beneath the stress and strain.

We send our hearts before us
Out of our failures here,
To where they stand and cheer us
Who knew not shame or fear:
Friends, heroes, saints and teachers
Whose deeds shine bright and clear,
Who cry, "Comrades, strive onward,
Your victory is near."

O Thou, whose temple are the pure in heart,
Thy chosen shrine,
More glorious than Jerusalem above,
For which men pine,—
O make my soul a temple sanctified,
Adorned with grace, where all things pure abide.

Pure unto whiteness I would be in thought
And outward deed;
From sin against thine awful purity
I would be freed:
Make thou my spirit simple, stainless, clear
"As the first snowdrop of the opening year."

Yet seek we not the sweet untempted life
Of saints in bliss;
Nor freedom from the war with wrong, the storm
We would not miss,
But ask that like the snow on Alpine height
The storm may make our souls more dazzling white.

Thy love, O Lord, loves unto purity,
And will not cease
To burn our dross, until the gold from earth
Finds full release.
In thy great purpose we would rest secure,
That thou wilt make us pure as Christ is pure.

In sorrow and in care
I trust in God's right hand,
Without whose loving will
One lily doth not stand;
Without whose loving will
No plans of men are planned;
Whose wisdom numbereth
The innumerable sand.

In sorrow and in care
I cast on God my fate,
To whom this ordered world
Is neither small nor great;
By whom this ordered world,
In all its varied state,
Is ruled that no bird falls
But at the appointed date.

In sorrow and in care
I give myself to Thee,
Who still will be my God
And give Thyself to me;
Who still will be my God,
And sweetly comfort me;
Nor fail in sheltering love
To all eternity.

S. K.

Guild News.

THE GUILDS UNION.—The annual meetings will be held on Monday in Conference week, at Ullett Road Church, Liverpool. The Council will meet at 5-30. At 6-30 tea will be provided for friends, delegates, and Guild members. At 7-30 a service will be held in the church, conducted by the Revs. J. J. Wright and E. D. Priestley Evans. At 8-15 the business meeting will be held. Chairman, Rev. J. Wood; speakers, R. Robinson, Esq., the Revs. C. Hargrove, F. K. Freeston, E. W. Lummis, etc. It is hoped that a large number of Guild members will attend. At the business meeting of the Conference on Thursday afternoon, April 23rd, a report from the Guilds Union will be presented.

PRIZE ESSAYS.—We remind our friends again of these essays—to be sent in to the Secretary, Rev. J. Ellis, by the end of March. In addition to the text books on Baxter already mentioned, intending essay writers will find an admirable summary of Baxter's life in No. 21 of Short Biographies (price one penny), published by the Religious Tract Society, London.

The Divine Judgment.

It is worth observing that the apostle Paul, in all he says of sin and its penalties, hardly ever —perhaps not once—speaks of retribution in the future life. Of guilt, or evil in the soul, he has a very strong and constant sense. His own conscience had been stung very sorely (as we may suppose) in thinking of his violent and unjust persecution of the disciples before his conversion, especially his share in the martyr death of Stephen, which seems to have haunted him ever after. Guilt is to him—as it must be to any one who realises what it is—the worst calamity that can befall a man. Salvation from it is the one great and precious gift that Christ has brought. But of its penalty, as a thing apart, Paul says almost nothing. The divine judgment, as he puts it, is all contained in the law of growth. Leave what you will, good or bad, to work out its natural results, and you have the strictest as well as the justest retribution that the Divine law could impose. What we, too, really want to see in all such things, is not the separation but the identity. We do not pretend to know what is beyond the veil of death, but we may try to understand what we can, by watching the course of things that determine our condition now. The most tremendous sentence ever spoken, as well as the most unerringly just, is that we find in the last chapter of the New Testament: "He that is unjust—let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy—let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous—let him be holy still." No man can afford to mock, and no man can possibly defy, such a sentence as that.

And now, a word upon a view of the matter which has been far more common. No man, knowing what the words mean,—no man, that is, fit to receive salvation,—would consent of his own will to accept his own rescue at the cost of hopeless misery to any human creature. I cannot think what some people mean when they pretend to thank God for their own particular salvation from a doom which multitudes are falling into every day. As if unending life were a desirable thing in itself—so desirable, that we must be grateful for enjoying it at that horrible price! I do not say it cannot be so; I do not say it is not so. I only say that to any decent man endless felicity for him, with an endless hell for anybody annexed, would be no comfort at all, but a very frightful thing to look forward to. Besides, it is nonsense to our better reason. Salvation is the fruit of holiness; and holiness must be one's free and constant choice. We know nothing about a blessedness that can be put upon a man from outside, like clothes or riches. It would only be tying apples on a twig, or roses on a bush: they make no part of the life; they only cover up the life. What a man wants is not felicity, but opportunity. As long as he chooses evil he will have it—till it grows into him, and becomes a part of him, and the worst thing that can happen to him.

What we may hope, as to that other higher life, is that its drift, its tendency, to good may be stronger and steadier than we find it here. I have not the least idea that it will (as some people seem to suppose) make saints and angels of us all, all at once. I, for one, should be very sorry if it did. I do not want to be an angel. I had rather be a man as the Lord made me, with the faults and virtues of a man—though the faults may be very many, and the virtues very few. I like to feel, always, that there is a chance of something better; and this means that there is room for improvement, and something to improve. How it is about the splendid or the terrifying imagery of the Bible about these things, I do not pretend to know. But I observe that the Bible speaks to us by the voice and imagination of men who felt very keenly the conflict of right and wrong, and went into it very heartily. I wish to stand by their side. Not before the throne, waving palms for a victory that is theirs, not mine. But by their side in the battle of life; that I may at least strike one good stroke before I die, to help in the final victory. I, for one, had rather be growing fit to stand with them before the throne than to be already there.

JOSEPH HENRY ALLEN.

Great thoughts originate from a large heart. No man with a cold, shrivelled heart ever blessed the world with great thoughts. The affections far more than the intellect quicken imaginative power.

News from the Field.

Since our last issue Christmas has passed and the New Year has begun its course. Our churches throughout the country have been busy with their celebrations, and in laying out their plans for the future. We cannot chronicle any of these, but we ean and do express our sympathy with fellow-workers everywhere, and we assure them of our interest in their welfare and prosperity.

The bazaar and sale of work activities continue. This method of raising funds seems to have caught on among our people, and to be productive of golden results. We only report and do not criticize. *Longsight* has gathered in £37, *Richmond* £80, *Kilburn* £200, *Aberdeen* £200, *Unity Church, Bolton*, £318, *Derby* £121, and doubtless other places, of which we have no record, have been reaping a golden harvest. We rejoice in whatever good has arisen from these manifold activities

It is pleasing to note that Sir W. H. Tate has put a new organ into the *Chorley Chapel*, in memory of his father, who was minister there a good many years ago. A filial act like this sheds lustre alike on son and sire.

We note that the *Rev. T. Shakespeare* has resigned the ministry at *Deal*, that *Dr. Hicks* is retiring from his ministry at *Islington*, and giving up pulpit work entirely so as to devote his life to philosophical studies, and that the *Rev. L. P. Jacks* is to leave *Birmingham* and take the chair at *Oxford* which has been so worthily filled by *Professor Upton*. *Dr. Hicks'* great gifts will find ample scope in philosophical studies, and we are sure to hear from him in some region of independent thought, where he will win a name for original investigation and conscientious appreciation of the work of fellow students. *Mr. Jacks* is a bold venturer into a new sphere of duty. To follow *Dr. Martineau* and *Mr. Upton* in a chair distinguished by their great work is to challenge the judgment of all living philosophers, and to raise expectations of the highest order. So far along his career *Mr. Jacks* has proved himself equal to the demands made upon him and we earnestly hope that he will rise to the high level required from any man who holds the Chair of Philosophy in *Manchester College, Oxford*. He will leave his old sphere amid many regrets of friends and admirers, and enter upon his new field of work with the good-will of all.

Whatever was the difficulty between the congregation at *Upper Brook Street, Manchester*, and its minister, the *Rev. T. Peach*, we are glad to see that it has disappeared and that the old relations are renewed and strengthened.

But the *Bell Street Mission* Committee in London seem to have made a hasty appointment to the ministry, of a man outside our ranks, and to have speedily retreated from what they had done. Are we careful enough in our appointments? and would it not be well if, first and best, we tried those whose names and character are a guarantee of worthiness?

What a solid piece of continuous work is recorded at Bolton! The *Bank Street Chapel* has now a registered membership of *426*, being an increase of 130 during the ministry of the *Rev. C. J. Street*. His preparation classes during six years have been attended by 165 persons, of whom 120 have joined Bank Street Chapel, and six the Halliwell Road Mission. This is a fine record, and must give to all concerned a glowing sense of satisfaction. The *Halliwell Road Mission* is on the way to independent existence. It has a membership of 120, with an average attendance of 80, and a Sunday School with an average attendance of 160 scholars. Its funds are growing, and *Mr. Thomason's* munificence is opening a way for new and spacious buildings.

New schools have been opened at *Park Lane*, near *Wigan*, and we doubt not they will prove of the greatest utility to our people there.

Mr. Wood, of *Birmingham*, has been replying to Bishop Gore's recent lectures, and has adopted the brave course of inviting questions after his addresses. These inquiry meetings are said to have been very interesting and to have produced good results.

We notice that the lady student at Manchester College (Miss Petzold) has been preaching in some of our pulpits. It will be a great gain to the cause of religion if cultured and devout women of special gifts and graces consecrate themselves to the work of the ministry. A cordial welcome to all such.

There was a fear in the minds of many lest we were to lose the great services of *Mr. Armstrong* in our pulpits. Happily that disaster has been averted, and he is to be relieved from over-pressure by the appointment of an assistant in his ministry. We trust there are many years of usefulness yet in reserve for him.

Another of the good women whose lives illustrate the sweetness of our faith has passed away from us, *Miss Evers*, so long and honourably associated with the Stourbridge congregation. She has passed into the nearer Presence.

And the strong churchman, *Dr. Temple*, has closed his great career on earth, and gone to the greater service in the life beyond the grave. He has left a great example to his successor in Augustine's Chair.

TAVISTOCK.—General Jacob entertained the congregation to supper at the Town Hall, on Tuesday evening, January 6th. A tea and New Year's tree (from which presents were distributed) provided for the Sunday School children. Mr. Jewers, dentist, Plymouth, exhibited a gramophone, which took the first prize at the Paris exhibition, and displayed magic-lantern views. A very enjoyable evening was spent, and the number present indicated favourably the growth of the congregation during the last few years. SCRUTATOR.

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The *Seed Sower* is admirably adapted for localising, and facilities are provided for that purpose. The circulation is already larger than that of any other magazine or journal published to meet the wants of our Free Churches. It gives a larger amount of matter, and every increase of circulation will be used to secure increased efficiency.

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THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

God, Our Heavenly Father.

The rose that is to have beautiful flowers must keep in the light, and get as much sunshine as it can, opening its very heart of gold to the sun. In darkness it would have no red flowers. The apple tree that would have fruit must be in the light, if sweet, ruddy apples are ever to hang among its green leaves. If we wish to be good, if we long for the knowledge of God our Heavenly Father, as the most precious thing, then we should earnestly wait on Him, and rejoice that He is our Guide. John the loving disciple of Jesus tells us that the presence of God is in every little child in this world, like a light to guide him. And when Moses, not long before his death, spoke to the Israelites about God, when they were about to go into Palestine without him, he gave them this message as their leader :—

"What I command you this day is not too wonderful for you, nor is it far off. It is not in the skies that you should say, who shall go up and bring it down? that you may hear and do it. The word is very near you, in your mouth, and in your heart, that you may do it." And Paul, who lived in Jerusalem when Jesus walked through its streets, and spoke in the porches of the Golden Temple, in his first letter to the Christians who lived in the Greek town of Corinth, asked them, if they did not know that they were each like a beautiful house fit for God to dwell in, and that the presence of God was in every one of them. And Jesus also told His disciples that the presence of His Father in Heaven dwelt with them, and would be in them. Now, no one writes more lovingly for little children in the Bible than John the beloved disciple, and in the most beautiful of his short letters, he says, "We know and believe the love which God has in us, for God is love, and every one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in Him."

You know that Jesus ever called God His "Father in Heaven," notably in that simple beautiful prayer which He gave to His disciples on one of their journeys from the Lake-side to Jerusalem. And he taught us to do the same. You know it well. It begins with these loving words—

Our Father which art in Heaven,
Hallowed be Thy Name!

And so we call God our Heavenly Father, and love Him whom Jesus loved. And in a hundred different ways Jesus spoke of God as His and our Heavenly Father, and taught the people that God is the Heavenly Father of us all, and that His love and kindness are constant towards us; and one day He told His disciples that His Heavenly Father was more ready to do good to little children than their own fathers could ever be.

Helped by the beautiful life and words of Jesus, we learn to turn to God as our Heavenly Father, and to love Him more and more, and to feel and know that He loves us, because of His telling us what is good and joyful to do, and in helping us to do it.

None but a loving Heavenly Father would so care for us, as to tell us what is right and good to do. None but a loving God would wish to keep us from harm and sorrow, and whatever is bad and harmful. In loving good things we are led to love our Heavenly Father more, who is the cause of all good. We love Him, because He loves us, and the more we rejoice to do His will the more do we show our love for Him. You love your mother, and you know she loves you, by the hundreds of kind things she does for you, and you show your love for her in many ways by doing what she asks you; and in like manner you will turn to God, and show your love for Him.

How good, how loving was Jesus! How good, how loving is a little child! Who can be more loving than you, little children! of whom Jesus said as He sat in the wayside shadow of the hot, dusty, Perean road, when the disciples would have kept them and their mothers back from Him :—

Allow the little children to come to Me, and forbid them not!
For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

He dearly loved these little children. God was in Him, loving them, and they loved Him dearly in return. And you will learn to love God, your heavenly Father, who loves you with all the love that was seen in Jesus. And it is this sweet lovingness which naturally draws little children close to their Heavenly Father, and which makes them so like Jesus.

Little children can show their love and obedience towards their Heavenly Father by loving each other, and by being gentle and kind, for Jesus told His disciples, when they were alone with Him, that they were to be like brothers, and to love each other as He loved them, and then everybody would know that they were His disciples. And so, if you are loving and kind, people will see that you are a little follower of Jesus, and servant of God. And John, the beloved, who was at the table with Jesus, sitting at His side and hearing every word when He spoke, tells us that "We love God, because he first loved us. If any person should say, 'I love God,' and does not love his own brother, he says what is not true, for if he does not love his own brother whom he sees, he cannot love God whom he does not see. Whoever loves God must love his brother also."

And so, to be like Jesus, to obey Him, you will love, not only your brothers and sisters, but everybody, and animals also, for it is so very easy for children to be loving. And who does not love a little child? for Jesus loved them much. In a fisherman's cottage, one day, by the side of the beautiful blue lake of Gennesaret, He told His disciples that little children are the favourites of God, and that they were never to harm them. He also said that they live in a happy kingdom with God as their King and Heavenly Father.

"See that you do not think lightly of little children," He said, "for I tell you that in Heaven their angels do always see the face of God, My Father in Heaven," adding, "Unless you become as little children, you shall not enter the Kingdom of Heaven." And all this was said with one of the fisherman's half-naked little boys sitting beside Him, as the example.

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